

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SAIGON 09951 290902Z

12

ACTION SS-30

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R 290830Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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S E C R E T SAIGON 9951

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCLR EG VS

SUBJ: EGYPTIAN INTEREST IN OVERFLIGHTS OF SOUTH VIETNAM

REF: (A) SAIGON 9786; (B) CAIRO 4466; (C) CAIRO 2675; (D)

CAIRO 1708

1. FOREIGN MINISTER BAC TOLD ME THIS MORNING THAT AFTER EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION WITH PRESIDENT THIEU THE PRESIDENT HAS APPROVED A POSITIVE RESPONSE TO BE MADE TO THE REQUEST FOR EGYPTIAN OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS IF SUCH A REQUEST SHOULD BE CONVEYED TO BAC ON BEHALF OF THE EGYPTIANS BY THE SAUDI ARABIAN FOREIGN MINISTER. BAC HAS EXTENDED AN INVITATION TO THE SAG FON MIN TO VISIT SAIGON AND OMAR SAQQAF HAS ACCEPTED BUT A DATE FOR THE VISIT HAS NOT YET BEEN SET. THE VIETNAMESE WOULD LIKE THE REQUEST TO BE CONVEYED DIRECTLY FROM FOREIGN MINISTER TO FOREIGN MINISTER AND NOT THROUGH THE GVN AMBASSADOR IN JIDDA. THEY SEE SAQQAF'S VISIT TO SAIGON AS THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO AND HAVE OBVIOUSLY IN PART (BUT NOT ENTIRELY) HIT ON THIS DEVICE AS A MEANS OF SETTING UP PRESSURE FOR THE VISIT TO TAKE PLACE SOON. SINCE A VISIT BY THE SAG FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD ALSO BE SUPPORTIVE OF OUR PURPOSES I SEE NO REASON TO TAKE ISSUE WITH THE PROPOSITION.

2. THE GVN RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST WOULD GRANT OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS FOR A SIX MONTHS PERIOD SUBJECT TO RENEWAL AFTER CONSULTATION. WHILE SUCH RENEWAL WOULD PROBABLY INVOLVE SOME FORM OF

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"COMPENSATOR ADVANTAGE" FOR OHE GVN IT IS NOT LIKELY IN THE END

TO BE MORE THAN EGYPTIAN TRAFFIC WILL BEAR.
LEHMANN

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NNN

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